Williams, Jr. et al. discloses a spin pack for spinning heterofilament fibers from two polymer flow streams, wherein each stream is subdivided, and the subdivided streams are filtered and delivered to a common header (Abstract). Side-by-side filaments are produced by combining the polymer streams upstream of the spinneret orifice and allowing them to issue together (col. 1, lines 29-32 and Fig. 3).

However, Williams, Jr. et al. fails to disclose or suggest creating planar molten polymer flow streams, or filtering those molten polymer flow streams as planar flow streams, or combining the separate polymers after issuance from the spinnerets, as claimed in the present application.

As illustrated in Fig. 2 of Williams, Jr. et al., the polymer flow streams are clearly subdivided into cylindrical passages (32a-c, and 34 a-c), which are then filtered through cylindrical filters 40. Further, it is clear from Fig. 3 of Williams, Jr. et al. that the polymer flow streams are combined prior to exiting the spinnerets.

Henne et al. discloses a method for producing a dialyzing membrane from solutions of at least two cuprammonium cellulose solutions which are spun from adjacent spinning slots and then introduced into a coagulating or precipitation bath (Abstract). The two layers of the dialyzing membrane are combined after exiting the spinning slots.

Unlike the present application, Henne et al. discloses an apparatus and method of what could be termed "solution spinning", wherein the polymer-forming material is dissolved in a solvent, and only forms a cohesive polymer after removal of the solvent, or specifically in the case of Henne et al., after the solution passes into a bath of non-solvent coagulating solution. Henne et al. fails to disclose or suggest forming a planar molten polymer flow stream, as claimed herein, whatsoever.

Accordingly, Henne et al., even if combined with Williams, Jr. et al., fails to disclose or suggest and therefore cannot make obvious the limitations of the present claims. Withdrawal of the rejection is requested on this basis.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(A) Over Williams, Jr. et al. In View Of Henne et al., further in view of Appel

Claims 7 and 10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Williams, Jr. et al. In view of Henne et al. and further in view of Appel. Applicants traverse this basis for rejection and respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal thereof.

Applicants reiterate their comments in traverse of the combination of Williams, Jr. et al. and Henne et al. That is, even if combined, the references fail to disclose each and every limitation of the present claims.

Appel discloses an extrusion die for thermoplastic polymers having a distributor which provides substantially constant residence time and pressure loss of polymer flowing through the die, which can be used to form discontinuous microfibers (Abstract). Appel is cited in paragraph 0003 of the present application as an example of a coat hanger distribution manifold.

Appel is entirely silent as to making multi-layered filaments and accordingly, as to combining separate polymer flow streams after their exit from the spinneret.

Applicants assert that the three cited references are improperly combined, since they are directed to non-analogous areas of the art: Appel to melt-blowing; Henne et al. to solution spinning; and Williams, Jr. et al. to spunbonding. One skilled in any one of these art areas would not look to any other of these areas for motivation to modify a reference teaching.

Accordingly, the presently claimed invention cannot be said to have been obvious in view of the improperly combined references. Withdrawal of the rejection is requested on this basis.

Respectfully submitted,

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